

President Trump's Joint Session Address: Promises Made, Promises Broken

Last night, President Trump delivered his first address before the United States Congress and gave a speech long on empty rhetoric and short on any real policy agenda. While the President made a lot of promises to the American people, he did not say how he will follow through on any of them:

On Jobs: "I am going to bring back millions of jobs."

He didn't lay out a jobs plan – or even say he would send to Congress a single jobs bill.

On Infrastructure: "Crumbling infrastructure will be replaced with new roads, bridges, tunnels, airports and railways gleaming across our beautiful land."

He didn't say when he would put forward an infrastructure plan, what it would look like, or how it would be paid for.

On National Security: "Our military will be given the resources its brave warriors so richly deserve."

He didn't say what specific programs he would cut in order to pay for an increase in defense spending – or how he is planning to convince Republicans to get on board, who have criticized his budget outline for cutting foreign aid, which makes our nation less safe.

On Health Care: "The way to make health insurance available to everyone is to lower the cost of health insurance, and that is what we will do."

The President has been saying for weeks that the White House is working on a plan, but has still not presented one. Congressional Republicans still don't have a plan to replace the Affordable Care Act either – and are still deeply divided over how to proceed.

Newspapers took note that the President failed to provide details on how to accomplish any of these objectives.

"He promised that 'dying industries will come roaring back to life,' vowed that military veterans will get care, and declared he will see to it that 'gleaming' roads, bridges and airports are erected from coast to coast... **But if congressional Republicans expected to hear policy details to assuage any concerns about how he will do that and whether they can fall in line behind him, Trump offered few.**" [Roll Call, [2/28/17](#)]

"More jobs and economic growth. Less crime and poverty. New roads and bridges... President Trump on Tuesday night offered a sweeping vision of the many ways in which he plans to improve the United States, **but he said little about his plans for achieving those ambitious goals.**" [NY Times, [3/1/17](#)]

"**The speech offered few new proposals, and Trump made no suggestions on how he would pay for his plans,** including a replacement of Obamacare, a tax overhaul offering cuts for the middle class, \$1 trillion in infrastructure investment and a large increase in defense spending." [Bloomberg, [2/28/17](#)]

"**Entirely devoid of substance,** the fortune-cookie-like admonitions sounded like time fillers to extend the speech to an acceptable length... Trump has been president for about 40 days, but he sounds like **he is still giving stump speeches...**" [Washington Post Op-ed by Jennifer Rubin, [2/28/17](#)]

Trump's speech was a continuation of the broken promises we have seen throughout Trump's campaign and the first forty days of his presidency:

JOBS & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY:

Promise Made	Promise Not Kept
He has said he'll be the "greatest jobs president." [Washington Times, 9/28/16]	He has failed to put forward a single jobs bill and his budget blueprint would cut investments in job growth, infrastructure, and education.
He recently told manufacturing CEOs, "bringing manufacturing back to America, creating high-wage jobs was one of our campaign promises and themes, and it resonated with everybody." [Detroit News, 2/23/17]	He doesn't have a jobs plan that outlines in any detail how he would bring manufacturing back to the U.S.

NATIONAL SECURITY:

Promise Made	Promise Not Kept
He said he would lead America back to safety. [Roll Call, 7/21/16]	From defending Putin's regime and alienating our allies to putting in place a Muslim ban , he has made America less safe and put our troops at risk.
He has put forward a budget that he claims "follows through on [his] promise of keeping America safe, keeping out terrorists, keeping out criminals..." [Politico, 2/27/17]	The proposed cuts to international affairs make our nation less safe – and retired military officials agree.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Promise Made	Promise Not Kept
He said he would repeal and replace the ACA: "It will be repealed and replaced... And it'll be great health care for much less money. So it'll be better health care, much better, for less money." [Politico, 1/11/17]	The President has still not put forward a plan to replace the Affordable Care Act and Republicans are deeply divided over how to replace the law .

IMMIGRATION & BORDER SECURITY

Promise Made	Promise Not Kept
He said he would build a wall that Mexico will pay for: "I would build a great wall, and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me, and I build them very inexpensively. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall." [Time, 6/16/15]	Mexico will not pay for the wall , and Trump doesn't have support from Congressional Republicans .

ENVIRONMENT

Promise Made	Promise Not Kept
He said he would ensure the country has "absolutely crystal clear and clean water" and "beautiful, immaculate air." [CSPAN, 11/7/16]	Republicans have passed a series of bills to roll back environmental protections, including clean water rules.

There's a difference between making promises and delivering results for the American people. With control of the White House and both chambers in Congress, it's time for Republicans to get serious about how they are going to get things done for the country.

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 3/1/2017